

# This week in history: September 22-28

This column profiles important historical events which took place during this week, 25 years ago, 50 years ago, 75 years ago and 100 years ago

**21 September 2025**

**25 years ago: US and Britain orchestrate regime change in Yugoslavia's election**

On September 24, 2000, general elections were held in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. At first glance, the presidential contest appeared to pit Slobodan Milosevic—Serbia's president from 1989 to 1997 and Yugoslav president since 1997—against the Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS), led by Vojislav Koštunica. In reality, however, the vote took place under intense pressure from the United States and Britain, which were driving a regime-change operation shaped by the interests of Wall Street, the IMF, and the World Bank. This election was designed as the final step in dismantling Yugoslavia, following NATO's bombing campaign only a year earlier that devastated the country.

According to official statistics, Koštunica won 48.22 percent of the vote, while Milosevic secured 40.23 percent as the candidate of the Socialist Party of Serbia–Yugoslav Left coalition. Yet DOS quickly claimed that Koštunica had in fact scored an outright victory, with 54.7 percent against Milosevic's 35 percent. Allegations of fraud were promoted internationally, serving to delegitimize Milosevic's government and justify Western intervention. Mass demonstrations broke out demanding his resignation.

Washington and London wasted no time declaring Milosevic finished. US President Bill Clinton dismissed him as a “fraud” who had lost his “last vestige of legitimacy,” while Britain's Foreign Secretary Robin Cook called a second-round vote “a waste of time.” Although the imperialist powers espoused democratic platitudes, behind the scenes, Western governments funneled tens of millions of dollars to DOS and its allies. These funds financed campaign logistics, training for pollsters, advertisements, and propaganda materials, most memorably the “Gotov je!” (“He is finished!”) campaign spearheaded by Otpor!, the youth movement central to the protests. In 2000 alone, the U.S. Congress approved \$105 million in aid to the Serbian opposition, openly acknowledging the scale of its intervention.

Portraying alleged electoral misconduct under Milosevic as the main issue obscured the deeper political reality: the outcome had already been set by Washington, London, and their allies. To the Yugoslav people and working class, exhausted by corruption, economic ruin, and years of war, Milosevic's downfall was a release. Yet the alternative presented to them—an opposition nurtured and financed by foreign powers—ensured not a sovereign popular transformation but a

re-engineering of Yugoslavia's political landscape in line with the Western project of permanent balkanization.

**50 years ago: Second assassination attempt on US President Gerald Ford in three weeks**

On September 22, 1975, an assassination attempt was made against US President Gerald Ford. He survived unharmed and the assailant, Sara Jane Moore, a 45-year-old woman, was immediately detained by police and Secret Service agents.

Moore had tried to shoot Ford with a revolver as he emerged before a crowd that had gathered outside the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco where he had been giving an address to the World Affairs Council. As she took aim at Ford, a bystander intervened to push her arm away.

A single shot was fired that ricocheted and caused minor wounds to a taxicab driver standing nearby. Ford was rushed away by security and then flew out of the city aboard Air Force One. For the remainder of his presidency Ford wore a bullet-proof overcoat during public appearances.

The attempt on Ford's life was the second within a span of just a few weeks, with another failed attempt having taken place on September 5, 1975, in Sacramento, California. The earlier attempt was carried out by Lynette Fromme, a follower of cult leader Charles Manson. Ford was unharmed as Fromme's gun failed to fire.

Sara Jane Moore's motivation for her attack on Ford is unclear. Significant questions remain unanswered. Moore had been an FBI informant tasked with supplying information about left-wing groups in California. She had joined or became close to several “left-wing radical” organizations in the 1970s. Among other tasks, Moore was to inform on the Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA), the group that had kidnapped Patty Hearst.

After Hearst was kidnapped in 1974, the SLA demanded that William Randolph Hearst, Patty's grandfather and billionaire newspaper owner, donate millions of dollars toward organizing a giveaway of food to needy San Francisco residents. The elder Hearst would comply and set up an organization called People in Need to conduct food distributions. Moore, who was an accountant, was hired by People in Need to help run the organization.

According to a 1977 interview with Moore, once she began working at People in Need, she was approached by the FBI who encouraged her to become more heavily involved with the SLA and related groups to supply the government with information. Interviews with associates of Moore suggest that at a certain point it became known among SLA members that she was an informant, and the assassination of Ford was meant to demonstrate her loyalty. She would maintain in interviews years later that her central motivation was that Ford was unelected to the office and appointed by “crooked” Richard Nixon and therefore an illegitimate president.

Moore was convicted of the attempted assassination and served over 30 years in prison. She was released in 2007 and has since given several public interviews. However, key details of her exact relations with the FBI and any potential FBI foreknowledge of her plan to shoot Ford remain unknown.

#### **75 years ago: US forces recapture Seoul during Korean War**

On September 28, 1950, United States Marines captured the remainder of Seoul after a week-long battle with Korean People’s Army (KPA) forces for the South Korean capital. The battle took place shortly after the US-led amphibious landings at Incheon on September 15, which preceded the slow advance on foot to Seoul, 20 miles away.

During the Battle of Incheon, the US Army’s X Corps was placed in command of the landing forces under the leadership of Major General Edward Almond. The combined strength of X Corps was approximately 40,000 infantry troops from the US Army and Marines as well as almost 9,000 ROK soldiers.

By September 21, X Corps had advanced within four miles of Seoul after crossing the Han River a day earlier, at which point they encountered heavy KPA resistance. Fighting lasted for several days, with Republic of Korea (ROK) Marines joining US forces on September 25. KPA forces were much weaker at Nam-san (South Mountain), a key defensive position to the south of the city which the US was able to capture within a day.

On September 26, Almond prematurely reported the capture of Seoul to UN Commander-in-Chief Douglas MacArthur based on reports from air reconnaissance of mass retreats of KPA forces. An official statement by MacArthur that day which proclaimed the “envelopment and seizure” of Seoul by X Corps was released hours after a large counterattack in western Seoul and a simultaneous assault on Nam-san. After initially being overrun, US and South Korean forces eventually retook their positions and pushed back the KPA once again.

After several more days of house-to-house fighting, by September 28, X Corps forces had swept through the entirety of Seoul, eliminating KPA presence in the city altogether. The recapture of the South Korean capital at this point in the war paved the way for the US to launch its invasion into North Korea, with the aim of placing the entirety of the Korean peninsula under the control of US-backed dictator Syngman Rhee, who was re-installed to power just one day after the recapture of Seoul.

On September 27, 1925, the Hindu supremacist K. B. Hedgewar founded the fascist militia RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh or National Volunteer Corps) at Nagpur in the state of Maharashtra in British-ruled India. The RSS was consciously modeled on fascist movements in Europe.

Hedgewar espoused Hindutva or Hindu supremacy, whose goal was to establish the hegemony of the Hindu religion in India. India then, as now, was a country of many religions, including not only Hinduism but also Islam, Jainism, Sikhism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism and others.

In the words of one of the RSS leaders, Hindutva has the following goals: “The non-Hindu peoples in Hindusthan must either adopt the Hindu culture and language, must learn to respect and hold in reverence Hindu religion, must entertain no idea but those of glorification of the Hindu race and culture ... or may stay in the country, wholly subordinated to the Hindu nation, claiming nothing, deserving no privileges, far less preferential treatment—not even citizen’s rights.”

Armed and trained RSS cadres led a three-day pogrom against Muslims in Nagpur in 1927.

The RSS did not participate in the Indian independence movement, and, according to some sources, collaborated with British imperialism. The RSS participated in the partition of the British Raj in 1947 with attacks on Muslims, helping to drive many from India into Pakistan. It was a member of the RSS who assassinated the main leader of the bourgeois nationalist movement, Mahatma Gandhi, in 1948.

The RSS was banned at various points by the Indian state, dominated by the Congress Party, over the next decades. It helped to organize pogroms against Christians and Muslims, particularly after the Hindu nationalist protests over and demolition of the Muslim Babri Masjid (Mosque) 1992 in Uttar Pradesh, in which it played a prominent role.

The Bharatiya Janata Party of Narendra Modi, which rules India today, has its origins the Bharatiya Jana Sangh, founded in 1951 as a political arm of the RSS.



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#### **100 years: Fascist Hindu RSS founded in India**